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# Distraction: Friend or Foe

Clifford Nass  
*Stanford University*

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## ***DISTRACTION: FRIEND OR FOE***

Clifford Nass

### **Nissan Distinguished Keynote Lecture**

The classic image in the psychology of driver-car interaction is that of a driver that wants to pay attention to the road: the job of designers is to avoid drawing the driver's attention away from the road. A number of changes in drivers and cars makes this approach obsolete. Specifically, the following questions are pertinent:

- Do drivers want to pay attention to the road?
- Can drivers pay attention to the road?
- Is attention/distraction the right metric for assessing the effects (positive or negative) of design?
- How do new interfaces necessitate a change in our thinking about attention/distraction?
- How do fully automated (autonomous) and partially automated vehicles necessitate a change in our thinking about attention/distraction?
- How can interface design improve driver attention/performance (as opposed to merely reducing attentional demands)?

*Clifford Nass (Ph.D. in Sociology, Princeton University) is the Thomas M. Storke Professor at Stanford University, with appointments in Communication, Computer Science, Education, Law, and Sociology. He is the author of three books (The Media Equation, Wired for Speech, and The Man Who Lied to His Laptop) and over 125 articles on the psychology of interactive technology and statistical methodology. He is director of the Communication between Humans and Interactive Media (CHIME) Lab and the Revs Program at Stanford, which focuses on the past, present, and future of the automobile. His research involves (laboratory and field) experimental studies on the social psychology of automotive interfaces, cognitive models of driving, the cognitive and social effects of multitasking, human-robot interaction, and adaptation and personalization in interfaces.*